

Reimagining Higher Education Towards Viksit Bharat Abhiyan 2047

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Abstract- The idea of making our country a developed nation and a 'Vishwaguru' by the 100th year of Independence in 2047 is not only about economic growth; it is also a cultural and intellectual renaissance. The role of Higher Education is going to be special, as the future 'factories and markets' will be created in the classrooms of universities. Though the current education system is vast, it still has a long way to go in terms of quality, resources, and employability. It becomes essential to restructure higher education around three pillars of economic, social and democratic development. There is a need to focus on skill development for future industries, make education more accessible in regional languages and develop the ability to think critically and lead. To achieve these goals, higher education needs to see an increase in funding with greater autonomy, industry partnership, and a shift in focus from research papers to patents and products. The regulator must leave the teaching-learning process alone, so that universities can themselves take up the responsibility to design their syllabi and hire and manage best in class faculty, and develop partnerships with foreign universities. Similarly, teachers need to think out-of-the-box and become mentors and facilitators. The single most important aim of education must be to create a 'job-generating' generation and not the other way around. India can become a global leader in innovation, peace, and prosperity by 2047 only when our labs create products that make the common man's life easy.

Keywords: *Viksit Bharat Abhiyan 2047, Higher Education, Restructuring of Education System, Intellectual Renaissance.*

I. INTRODUCTION

India will be completing 100 years of her independence in 2047, and the proposal to make our country a developed nation by then is not only about economic growth. It is a call to usher in a cultural and intellectual renaissance of sorts. As India marches towards becoming a developed nation, it has to realize its potential as the most vibrant youthful society of the 21st century. The axis of development for any country

is going to be its education system, and as we target to be a part of the knowledge-based global economy, higher education becomes the most vital.

The journey towards Viksit Bharat can be realized only when we have the best higher education system. Higher education in India needs to undergo a paradigm shift by 2047. As the birthplace of India's youth, higher educational institutions need to take up the responsibility to make them job-generators and not job-seekers.

At the heart of this exercise lies the role of teachers. The role of a teacher is of utmost importance in shaping the future of higher education in the country, as the kind of manpower that India will require in 2047 is going to be moulded in the classrooms. To create leaders and thinkers, the pedagogy followed by teachers needs to change. Teachers need to make their classrooms a debating forum so that students become better at questioning. With the kind of disruptive technologies that are poised to change the world by 2047, it will become essential to prepare students for the 'unknown'. Modern-day teachers have an opportunity to help students think critically so that they can face the future challenges with confidence.

Moreover, to make India a developed country by 2047, it becomes essential to make higher educational institutions hubs for research and development. It will be critical to make the best research work find relevance in the real world. There is no point in creating research papers that have no scope for practical applications. Research in Indian universities must be geared towards creating products that will solve real-life problems.

Another important aspect of higher education that needs to be considered is its role in conserving and sustaining the environment. Formal education is a powerful tool for achieving environmental

sustainability. The world needs smart solutions to curb environmental degradation, and Indian higher educational institutions can lead the way to develop such solutions. By 2047, the country needs to become a global leader in environmental conservation by developing innovative smart technologies and taking the lead in making the environment sustainable for future generations. Therefore, it becomes essential that we undertake a critical examination of the existing system of higher education in India to relook and restructure it to meet the challenges of Viksit Bharat.

The Indian Higher Education System

Indian higher education system is one of the largest in the world in terms of volume and diversity. Higher education in India is imparted through universities, colleges, institutes and other institutions of higher education. The university grants commission and other statutory bodies regulate various aspects of higher education in the country.

The salient features of the current higher education system are:

- **Wide coverage:** The current higher education system in India has a large number of Central, State, Private and Deemed Universities. The education system has a large number of institutes providing technical and management education. Some of the institutes, such as IITs, IIMs and AIIMS have gained international recognition and provide high-quality education.
- **Multidisciplinary Education:** The new National Education Policy has proposed a four-year curriculum with multiple entry and exit options with emphasis on multidisciplinary education. Other recommendations of the policy include academic bank of credit and promoting research in higher education.
- **Digital Education:** The rise of the internet and online courses has led to the widespread use of digital education. Especially in the post-COVID-19 situation, the online mode of education has gained prominence. Indian higher education is witnessing a paradigm shift with the use of online education through MOOCs, video courses, and online libraries.
- **Social Justice:** Indian higher education system has mechanisms in place to promote social justice such

as reservations and financial assistance to SCs, STs, OBCs, and EWS. There is a focus on promoting women's education, skill development, and fostering entrepreneurship.

- **Research and Innovations:** Various higher educational institutions promote research culture amongst students and teachers. There is scope for promoting collaborations and partnerships with industries and other countries to enhance research culture and international brand value.

Challenges of the Current System

While the higher education system in India has its strengths, it has various challenges that need to be addressed. Quality education, research and innovation are some of the areas that need to be worked on:

- Despite having some of the best educational institutes in the world, the current education system in India has a huge disparity in the quality of education provided by various institutes.
- Lack of funding and infrastructural facilities pose a great challenge to higher education.
- Vacancies of permanent and qualified faculty members present a major challenge. Higher educational institutions lack funds to provide competitive salaries to teachers.
- There is a lack of research culture and funding in universities and colleges. Indian institutes publish fewer research papers in journals and score low on global reputation.
- Lack of industry linkages and research collaboration with foreign universities impacts the research and development capabilities of Indian institutions.
- Many students graduate without acquiring necessary skills that makes them job-ready thereby leading to a high rate of unemployment.
- Lack of access to online education for students in rural areas due to poor internet connectivity poses a great challenge.
- Higher education suffers from a lot of bureaucratic delays and lacks transparency and autonomy.

The Role of Educational Institutions

Educational institutions need to be at the forefront of Viksit Bharat mission and work in tandem with

industry and other stakeholders to usher in the new era of economic and social development.

1. Institutions must strive to be a centre for innovation and research so that future products and processes are developed with the help of core research.
2. They must play a major role in building future citizens who are not only rooted in their cultural traditions but also contribute to global governance and tackle future challenges.
3. They have a major role to play in promoting Atmanirbhar Bharat by working closely with industries to create solutions to local problems.

The Way Forward for Viksit Bharat:

To achieve the goals of Viksit Bharat, there is a need to make changes in the following areas:

1. Higher Education and Economic Development: There is a need to focus on skill development of youth for future industries. Apart from imparting traditional skills, there is a need to provide training in futuristic industries such as block chain, AI, semiconductors, and Green Energy. It will also be important to have startup incubation cells at various universities. Students must engage in creating products that are patentable in collaboration with industries.
2. Higher Education and Social Development: There is a need to provide education in regional languages especially in technical streams. It will be important to provide safe and secure learning environments for women and persons with disabilities. Higher educational institutions need to encourage value-based education and develop a sense of social responsibility among students.
3. Higher Education and Democratic Development: Apart from traditional teaching and learning, there is a need to focus on higher-order skills such as reasoning and debate. It will be important to encourage self-governance among students and develop political awareness by educating them about the Constitution of India and their Fundamental Rights and duties as citizens.

Implementation and Suggestions

To be able to successfully implement the proposed changes, the following suggestions have been made:

1. Public-Private Partnership and Funding: The government should raise its expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP. There is a need to promote public-private partnerships so that industries fund the improvement of various universities.
2. Credit transfer or Multiple Entry and Exit: Credit transfer can be encouraged so that students can pursue graduation in science from one university and music from another. It will be important to implement the new policies on multiple entry and exit smoothly at the grassroots level.
3. Teacher Education: Teachers need to act as mentors and motivators for students. Industry experts can also be invited to teach specialized papers as Professors of Practice.
4. Autonomy to Universities and Colleges: The regulatory bodies such as UGC and AICTE need to leave the teaching-learning process to the institutions so that they can devise their own unique strategies for promoting research, development, entrepreneurship, and innovation. Autonomous colleges and universities should be free to create alliances with foreign universities.
5. Monitoring and Evaluation: A robust accreditation system should be designed that ranks universities on various performance indicators such as placements, start-ups, and number of patents filed.

Modernization and Upgradation of Curriculum and Teaching-learning Process

To keep up with the rapid changes in the world by 2047, it will be important to incorporate new-age technologies such as AI, quantum computing, biotechnology, green energy, and robotics in the curriculum. It will be essential to bring together industry and academia to co-develop curricula. There should be mandatory internships for students, and curriculum flexibility should be encouraged so that students from arts can specialize in science and vice versa.

Focus on Research

Indian research needs to be globally competitive. There should be increased funding from the government through the National Research Foundation. There is a need to encourage research from the undergraduate level itself. The culture of 'publish or perish' needs to be discouraged and replaced with a focus on creating "products and patents".

Autonomy and Governance

Universities need to be given greater autonomy to decide their syllabi, recruit highly qualified and motivated teachers, and develop international tie-ups. Boards of Governors of universities need to be empowered to appoint and motivate teachers.

Teacher Training and Capacity Building

The quality of education is directly related to the quality of teachers. It is essential to encourage world-class faculty development programs to motivate teachers to adopt new teaching methodologies. To attract the best minds in teaching, financial incentives must be provided, and lateral entry from other countries must be encouraged.

Technology and Global Outreach

High-quality education must reach the hintermost parts of the country through digital universities and ed-tech. AI must be leveraged to make learning more engaging and interactive. Indian universities must set up overseas campuses, and foreign universities must be encouraged to set up campuses in India so that Indian education standards catch up with the global standards. This will help in arresting the Brain Drain and encourage Brain Gain.

Conclusion

India's developed status as a 'Vishwaguru' by 2047 will not only be reflected in its economic growth but also in its capacity to generate and share knowledge with the rest of the world. Higher education will play a critical role in realizing this goal as it will contribute to making our youth globally competitive. Our colleges and universities need to be futuristic and disruptive to transform our youth into job creators

instead of job seekers. Innovations taking place in our research labs need to find their way into the marketplace so that they improve people's lives. Higher education needs to be holistic and contribute to overall human development, and not just focus on the physical self. If we want India to emerge as a global leader in 2047, then our higher education system needs to create a conducive environment to enable our youth to take on challenges and lead the world in research, peace, and prosperity.

Moreover, if we want our youth to become future leaders and thinkers capable of taking India to greater heights, we need to reorient the entire pedagogy used in teacher education. We must encourage our teachers to become mentors who can inspire critical thinking and action in their students. By completely revamping the education system that churns out our future teachers, we will be building future leaders. Our focus must shift to making our youth resilient to disruptions, which is only possible through their overall development. India's developed status will be realized only when we encourage environmental consciousness and sustainability as core values. The focus of higher education needs to be on making our students socially conscious, environmentally sensitive citizens who are committed to serving the larger public good. While we have listed a few suggestions, there are many more ways through which we can contribute to building a healthy, developed India. Let us all pitch in our bit toward realizing this goal.

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